The HeART and Science of Making Connections

Showing up with Courage and Authenticity

by: Yvette Clark
This presentation is about:

- The importance of connecting with others
- How to connect in a meaningful way
- How to make connections professionally and personally

This presentation will not cover:

- Social media networking
- How to build an on-line presence
What does it mean to connect?

**con·nect /kəˈnekt/ verb**

- Touching base
- Moment of connection
- Giving each other attention
- Rapport

Did we just become best friends?
Why is it important to connect?

• Humans are hardwired for connection

“A deep sense of love and belonging is an irresistible need of all people. We are biologically, cognitively, physically, and spiritually wired to love, to be loved, and to belong. When those needs are not met, we don't function as we were meant to. We break. We fall apart. We numb. We ache. We hurt others. We get sick.”

- Brené Brown
Why is it important to connect?

- We are social animals and need each other
- Friendship
- Knowledge sharing

At work, connecting is crucial

- Sought-after job skills
- Emotional Intelligence
- “People don’t quit jobs, they quit bosses.”
Why is it important to connect?

“Hire for attitude. Train for skill.”

“You put your employees first. If you truly treat your employees that way, they will treat your customers well…”

“A company is stronger if it is bound by love rather than by fear.”

- Herb Kelleher
The Science of Connecting

There is **scientific proof** that social connection has an impact on physical health and well-being.

Longevity  
Immune System  
Self-Esteem  
Obesity & High Blood Pressure  
Inflammation levels  
Feelings of Physical Pain

When you feel connected, you reap the benefits
Wholehearted connections include these elements:

1. Having Courage
2. Being Vulnerable
3. Being Authentic
4. Having Empathy
5. Being Curious
6. Listening
#1 Have Courage

“The cave you fear to enter holds the treasure you seek.”    - Joseph Campbell

A call to courage:

• Walking into the unknown is unpredictable and uncontrollable
• How we behave and show up in difficult situations

Identify the cave:

• Choose courage over comfort
• It’s okay to feel brave and afraid
#1 Have Courage

“it is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again . . . Who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly.”

- Theodore Roosevelt
#2 Be Vulnerable

“What stands in the way, is the way.”

- Marcus Aurelius

- Vulnerability is a big barrier...here are some ways to break it down
  - Be okay with being imperfect
  - Share a personal story
  - Love even when there is no guarantee
  - Practice gratitude and joy
  - Believe we are enough

Our ability to connect to others will never be greater than our capacity for vulnerability
#3 Be Authentic

“Remember George no man is a failure who has friends.”

- It’s a Wonderful Life

- Be yourself
- Be brave
- Do these things
  - Say no
  - Ask for forgiveness
  - Admit you’re afraid
  - Ask for help
- Trust is key to authenticity
#4 Show Empathy
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- 4 qualities of empathy
  - Take their perspective
  - Let go of judgment
  - Understand their feelings
  - Communicate understanding
- “You are not alone”
- Fuels connection

Empathy is at the heart of connection because you have to connect to something in yourself that knows the other person’s feeling.
Empathy Misses

The “at leasts...”

- Sympathy
- Gasp and Awe
- Might Fall
- Block and Tackle
- Boots and Shovel
- If you think that’s bad
#5 Be Curious

- Be curious!
- Easier to learn something when you are curious
- Curiosity starters
  - I’m curious about...
  - Tell me more...
  - Help me understand...
- You become a learner, not shut off to new ideas
**#5 Be Curious**

Benefits of being curious

- Releases dopamine
- Improves memory – we retain information better

"Curiosity may put the brain in a state that allows it to learn and retain any kind of information, like a vortex that sucks in what you are motivated to learn, and also everything around it," explains Dr. Gruber.
#6 Be a Good Listener
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Be present

• Eye contact
• Most important person in the room
• Avoid distractions
• Don’t think about what you are going to say next, be intent on what they are saying

Ask follow-up questions
The Elements of Meaningful Connections

1. Courage → Learning
2. Vulnerability → Be who you are
3. Authenticity → The cave
4. Empathy → Exposure
5. Curiosity → Connection
6. Listening → Engaged
“Dare to be happy.”

It’s okay to be happy, kind, patient, and more relaxed at work...

• People will want to be around you
• Create solutions rather than problems

Ways to connect...

• Talk TO people, not ABOUT them
• Make others feel good
• Ease off the “proving” mode
• Be curious and learn something new
• Serve others
Connecting at Events
Connecting at Events

• Start with...Hello, I’m ______
• Remember their name
• Ask open-ended questions to learn about them
• Try to connect something about yourself in what they’re saying
• When the conversation is over, say thank you and you are so glad to have met them
• Follow-up!
Carrying Connection into Personal Life

One way is through serving
- creates purpose
- creates value
- creates provision
- changes the world because it changes others

“Anybody can be great because anybody can serve.”
- Martin Luther King, Jr.
“If you take the **time and energy** to establish rapport with others,...You'll have a better connection with people, which will create more nourishing interactions - personally and professionally.”

- Richard Carlson, *Don’t Sweat the Small Stuff at Work*
“Knowledge is only a rumor until it lives in the bones.”

- Asaro Tribe in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea

Remember to choose courage over comfort
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Resources

Books:
- Brene Brown, Dare to Lead
- Richard Carlson, Don’t Sweat the Small Stuff at Work
- Charles Feltman, The Thin Book of Trust
- James Manktelow, Mind Tools for Managers

Articles:
- “How curiosity changes the brain to enhance learning,” [https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/10/141002123631.htm](https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/10/141002123631.htm)
- “States of Curiosity Modulate Hippocampus-Dependent Learning via the Dopaminergic Circuit,” [https://www.cell.com/neuron/fulltext/S0896-6273(14)00804-6](https://www.cell.com/neuron/fulltext/S0896-6273(14)00804-6)
- “7 Ways To Be A Good Listener,” [https://liveboldandbloom.com/02/relationships/how-to-be-a-good-listener](https://liveboldandbloom.com/02/relationships/how-to-be-a-good-listener)

Videos:
- Patch Adams movie clip: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=48&v=-V-p_j2M6sQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=48&v=-V-p_j2M6sQ)
- How NOT to Network: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuMoKtW73WU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuMoKtW73WU)